



Creating Pleasant Preschool Mealtimes to Improve Child Nutrition



# Pass The Peaches

## Please (and Thank You)



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# Preschool Mealtimes

**How Pleasant and Positive  
Family-Style Meals in  
Childcare  
Help Young Children  
Become  
Competent Eaters**



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# Presenter: Dayle Hayes, MS, RD

- Script writer and producer for Team Nutrition videos
- Consultant to agencies & organizations nationwide
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# CACFP Meal Patterns

Child Meal Pattern Lunch or Supper			
Food Components	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12 <sup>1</sup>
<b>1 milk</b> fluid milk	1/2 cup	3/4 cup	1 cup
<b>2 fruits/vegetables</b> juice, <sup>2</sup> fruit and/or vegetable	1/4 cup	1/2 cup	3/4 cup
<b>1 grains/bread<sup>3</sup></b> bread or cornbread or biscuit or roll or muffin or cold dry cereal or hot cooked cereal or pasta or noodles or grains	1/2 slice 1/2 serving 1/4 cup 1/4 cup 1/4 cup	1/2 slice 1/2 serving 1/3 cup 1/4 cup 1/4 cup	1 slice 1 serving 3/4 cup 1/2 cup 1/2 cup
<b>1 meat/meat alternate</b> meat or poultry or fish <sup>4</sup> or alternate protein product or cheese or egg or cooked dry beans or peas or peanut or other nut or seed butters or nuts and/or seeds <sup>5</sup> or yogurt <sup>6</sup>	1 ounce 1 ounce 1 ounce 1/2 egg 1/4 cup 2 Tbsp. 1/2 ounce 4 ounces	1 1/2 ounces 1 1/2 ounces 3/4 egg 3/8 cup 3 Tbsp. 3/4 ounce 6 ounces	2 ounces 2 ounces 1 egg 1/2 cup 4 Tbsp. 1 ounce 8 ounces
<sup>1</sup> Children age 12 and older may be served larger portions based on their greater food needs. They may not be served less than the minimum quantities listed in this column. <sup>2</sup> Fruit or vegetable juice must be full-strength. <sup>3</sup> Breads and grains must be made from whole-grain or enriched meal or flour. Cereal must be whole-grain or enriched or fortified. <sup>4</sup> A serving consists of the edible portion of cooked lean meat or poultry or fish. <sup>5</sup> Nuts and seeds may meet only one-half of the total meat/meat alternate serving and must be combined with another meat/meat alternate to fulfill the lunch or supper requirement. <sup>6</sup> Yogurt may be plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened.			





# It's Only Nutrition

## WHEN they eat or drink it!



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# Raising Competent Eaters

## For a lifetime of health



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# Today's Webinar

- Review the normal eating behaviors of young children.
- Outline the Ellyn Satter Approach to feeding young children.
- Discuss critical importance of family-style meals in childcare settings.
- Share tips and resources to make preschool mealtimes more pleasant for both children and staff.



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# Mealtimes in Childcare

- Provide fuel for daily activities and learning
- Promote normal growth and development
- **Shape future relationships with food**



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# POLL #1

## What best describes your personal interest in childcare meals?

- I work in a Head Start program.
- I work in a center-based childcare setting.
- I work in a home-based childcare setting.
- I train childcare providers.
- I am a parent of preschool children.



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# Normal UNPREDICTABLE Eaters

- A lot one day, a little the next
- Rarely a square meal
- Eat what they like, not what they *should*
- Accept foods one day, reject the next (aka *food jags*)
- Need time to enjoy new foods



# “Picky” Eaters are Normal

- A lot one day, a little the next
- Rarely a square meal
- Eat what they like, not what they *should*
- Accept foods one day, reject the next (aka *food jags*)
- Need time to enjoy new foods





# Research on Children's Eating

## Kids are born with:

- Ability to self regulate food intake
- Preference for high calorie, energy dense foods
- Wide variability in intake from meal to meal - and from day to day
- Wariness about new food, esp. from 2 to 6 years of age



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# Research on Children's Eating

## Children eat what they know and like.

- They like familiar and new foods together.

## Children model adults around them.

- They try a new food quicker and eat more of it when adults are eating the same food and eating it with pleasure.

## Portion size affects how much they eat.

- When serving themselves, they take age appropriate servings and eat less of it.



# VIDEO #1

**Mary Bolick talks about normal eating habits of the children in their program**



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# Ellyn Satter Approach to Feeding

**Based on the POSITIVE Feeding Relationships between children and their parents/caregivers**

- Raising competent, capable eaters
- Feeding can support a child being competent with eating, growing appropriately, and doing her part to contribute to mealtime harmony ...  
**OR NOT!!**



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# Positive Feeding Relationships

- Maintain a **Division of Responsibility**
- Adults do the *what, when,* and where of feeding.
- Children do the *how much* and *whether* of eating





# FOR INFANTS

## Division of Responsibility

- The parent/caregiver is responsible for *what*
- The child is responsible for *how much* (and everything else)







# FOR TODDLERS - TEENS

## Division of Responsibility

- The parent/caregiver is responsible for *what*, *when*, and *where* of feeding.
- The child is responsible for *how much* and *whether to*



# Adult Responsibilities

- Choose and prepare food.
- Provide regular meals and snacks.
- Make eating times pleasant.
- Show children what they have to learn about food and mealtime behavior.
- Prevent grazing for food or drinks between mealtimes.



# Adult Responsibilities

Let children  
grow into  
the bodies  
that are  
right for  
them.



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# Child Responsibilities

- Children will eat.
- They will eat the amount they need to grow normally.
- They will enjoying an increasing variety of food of beverages.
- They will learn to behave well at the table.
- They will grow predictably.



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# Healthy Feeding Relationship

- Children are born wanting to eat, knowing how much to eat, and will grow the way nature intended.
- Adults provide structure, support, and opportunity (**what, when, and where**).
- Children choose **how much** and **whether to eat** from what the adults provide.



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# VIDEO #2

## Dayle Hayes talks about the Division of Responsibility in Childcare Settings



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# Why Adults Cross the Line

- Our history with feeding and eating influences how we think and act ...
- ... children need consistent feeding messages from all the adults in childcare.



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# When Adults Cross the Line

- When adults restrict foods/calories, children tend to gain **MORE** weight.
- When adults pressure, bribe, or force children to eat more, the children eat **LESS**.
- Kids feel bad about eating, mealtime is not pleasant for anyone.



# Ellyn Satter Approach to Feeding

- Is simple and practical
- Is based on trust, respect, and normal developmental stages
- Makes mealtimes more enjoyable and less stressful for adults and children
- Has clear lines of responsibility for caregiver/parent and child
- Takes the worry out of feeding



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# Consistent with Head Start Performance Standards

- Offer variety to broaden child's food experiences.
- Don't use food as punishment or reward.
- Encourage but don't force child to taste food.
- Allow sufficient time for each child to eat.
- Children, staff and volunteers eat together.
- Offer all the same food.



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# What about these RULES?

- *Clean Plate Club*
- *One Bite Rule*
- *The No Dessert Until You've Eaten Your Vegetables*

Should we use these rules?

**No. They don't help children  
become competent eaters or  
make smart choices.**



# Family-Style Meals



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# Family-Style Meals

*If I had to settle for one thing to tell families about preventing child overweight, helping children to eat a variety of food and raising them to have positive eating attitudes and behaviors, I would say, **have meals.***

**Ellyn Satter**

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# Family-Style Meals

- Adults eat with children.
- Children pass and serve food.
- Children pour their own milk.
- Adults “teach” conversations.



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# VIDEO #3

## Lenita Hough talks about family-style meals with small children



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# Family-Style Meals

- Do not happen by accident
- Require planning
- Require staff training
- Are worth the effort



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# POLL #2

**What does your program do to make meals “family-style”?**

**Check ALL that apply.**

- Adults eat with children.
- Children pass and serve food.
- Children pour their own milk.
- Adults “teach” conversations.



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# Family-Style Meals

- Require planning and staff training

**What do you want to do  
differently moving  
forward?**



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# Tips and Resources

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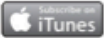
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## Creating pleasant and positive mealtimes.....

[Webinar Training for Schools](#) on February 21, 2012, 2:00 - 3:00 pm

[Webinar Training for Early Childhood Educators](#) on February 22, 2012, 2:00 - 3:00 pm

### IN SCHOOLS

#### IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION & CHILD CARE PROGRAMS

**Who can use this information?** Early childhood educators, child care programs, Head Start programs, paraprofessionals, teachers, parents; any adult supervising mealtimes with children.

**Why are meals in child care programs important?**

The experiences which young children have now with food/meals will shape their future/life-long relationships with food. The goal is to develop healthy, capable and competent eaters. Meals consumed at child care are essential to the growth of healthy children- their bodies, minds and behaviors.


**Why should child care programs strive to support pleasant and positive mealtimes vs. just getting the children fed?**

- Mealtime should be a time for young children to relax, socialize and nourish their bodies. When mealtimes are pleasant, children eat better and learn to try a variety of foods in a positive way.
- Many kids are undernourished, even if they are overfed. Meals provide key nutrients for children to grow and learn to their full potential.
- Meals consumed at child care may be the only reliable meal of the day for some children.
- Positive mealtimes teach healthy eating habits and acceptable meal time behaviors.
- A Positive Feeding Approach requires effective teamwork and communication amongst staff, children and parents.

**Sometimes, mealtimes in child care programs are not so pleasant:** children are pressured to eat, supervising adults are not trained in how to be supportive at mealtime, supervising staff do not eat or drink the same food as they serve the children, etc. This training addresses a variety of mealtime scenarios and tips for making mealtimes with children pleasant and enjoyable for both children and adults.

**Upcoming Webinar:**

Please join Montana Team Nutrition for a webinar-- Pass the Peaches Please - Creating Pleasant and Positive Mealtimes in Early Childhood Education Programs on Wednesday, February 22, 2012 from 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm (MST).



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# Mealtime Philosophy/Policy

- Simple, direct, easy to follow, consistent messages for children
- Helps children learn life-long skills for a healthy relationship with food
- Basis for training all staff
- Post near tables, share with parents



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# Mealtime Philosophy/Policy



## Mealtime Philosophy

During mealtimes at (insert name of childcare center), adults and children eat together and share the same food, milk, juice and water. The adults seated at each table model the mealtime philosophy and appropriate mealtime behavior.

Children serve themselves and pour their own milk, juice or water. They are invited to put at least a small portion of every food onto their plates. They are encouraged, but never forced, to taste everything.

Children are allowed to eat at their own pace. Dessert is served as part of the meal. Children may eat dessert without finishing their other food.

We encourage pleasant discussions about food, nutrition, and other topics. After the meal, children put away their dishes, utensils and paper products.

ADULTS are the most important role models for children at mealtimes. Please remember that children will do as they see.

We support a philosophy that respects a *division of responsibility* between adults and children at mealtime. Simply put,

- Adults decide the *what, when, and where* of feeding
- Children decide *whether they will choose to eat the foods offered and how much to eat*



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# Mealtime Philosophy/Policy

- Helps staff solve challenging feeding situations in a consistent manner
- Educates parents on the division of responsibility and raising competent, capable eaters



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# Setting the Table

## For Little Hands



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# It's Only Nutrition

## WHEN they eat or drink it!



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# Setting the Table

- Table height
- Chair size
- Plate, cup/glass, utensil
- Serving bowl and utensil
- Pitcher



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# VIDEO #4

**Robyn Cavaness talks about  
setting the table for small  
fingers and appetites**



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# Montana Office of Public Instruction

## Denise Juneau, State Superintendent

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# Resources for YOU




## Phrases that *HELP* and *HINDER*

As the caregiver, you play the biggest role in your child's eating behavior. What you say has an impact on developing healthy eating habits. Negative phrases can easily be changed into positive, helpful ones!



Phrases that <i>HINDER</i>	Phrases that <i>HELP</i>
<p><b>INSTEAD OF ...</b></p> <p><i>Eat that for me.</i> <i>If you do not eat one more bite, I will be mad.</i></p> <p>Phrases like these teach your child to eat for your approval and love. This can lead your child to have unhealthy behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs about food and about themselves.</p>	<p><b>TRY ...</b></p> <p><i>This is kiwi fruit; it's sweet like a strawberry.</i> <i>These radishes are very crunchy!</i></p> <p>Phrases like these help to point out the sensory qualities of food. They encourage your child to try new foods.</p>
<p><b>INSTEAD OF ...</b></p> <p><i>You're such a big girl; you finished all your peas.</i> <i>Jenny, look at your sister. She ate all of her bananas.</i> <i>Your have to take one more bite before you leave the table.</i></p> <p>Phrases like these teach your child to ignore fullness. It is better for kids to stop eating when full or satisfied than when all of the food has been eaten.</p>	<p><b>TRY ...</b></p> <p><i>Is your stomach telling you that you're full?</i> <i>Is your stomach still making its hungry growling noise?</i> <i>Has your tummy had enough?</i></p> <p>Phrases like these help your child to recognize when he or she is full. This can prevent overeating.</p>
<p><b>INSTEAD OF ...</b></p> <p><i>See, that didn't taste so bad, did it?</i></p> <p>This implies to your child that he or she was wrong to refuse the food. This can lead to unhealthy attitudes about food or self.</p>	<p><b>TRY ...</b></p> <p><i>Do you like that?</i> <i>Which one is your favorite?</i> <i>Everybody likes different foods, don't they?</i></p> <p>Phrases like these make your child feel like he or she is making the choices. It also shifts the focus toward the taste of food rather than who was right.</p>
<p><b>INSTEAD OF ...</b></p> <p><i>No dessert until you eat your vegetables.</i> <i>Stop crying and I will give you a cookie.</i></p> <p>Offering some foods, like dessert, in reward for finishing others, like vegetables, makes some foods seem better than others. Getting a food treat when upset teaches your child to eat to feel better. This can lead to overeating.</p>	<p><b>TRY ...</b></p> <p><i>We can try these vegetables again another time. Next time would you like to try them raw instead of cooked?</i> <i>I am sorry you are sad. Come here and let me give you a big hug.</i></p> <p>Reward your child with attention and kind words. Comfort him or her with hugs and talks. Show love by spending time and having fun together.</p>

Adapted from "What You Say Really Matters?" in *Feeding Young Children in Group Settings*, Dr. Janice Fletcher and Dr. Laurel Branan, University of Idaho.



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# Staff Training

- Sharing time
- Learning from each other
- What's working in our program?
- What could we be doing differently?



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# Thank you for

## Passing the Peaches



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# Acknowledgements

- Ellyn Satter Associates for the teaching materials and handouts.  
[www.EllynSatter.com](http://www.EllynSatter.com)
- Dr. Janice Fletcher and Dr. Laurel Branen, University of Idaho, Feeding Young Children in Group Settings
- Child Care Resources in Missoula, MT  
– Jennifer Swartz and Judy Kendall





# QUESTIONS

- Ellyn Satter Institute

[www.ellynsatter.com](http://www.ellynsatter.com)

- OPI School Nutrition Programs

[http://opi.mt.gov/Programs/SchoolPrograms/School\\_Nutrition/](http://opi.mt.gov/Programs/SchoolPrograms/School_Nutrition/)

- Montana Team Nutrition

[http://opi.mt.gov/Programs/SchoolPrograms/School\\_Nutrition/MTTeam.html](http://opi.mt.gov/Programs/SchoolPrograms/School_Nutrition/MTTeam.html)

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